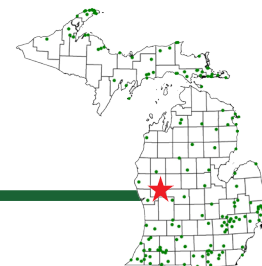


Michigan Nature Association Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary



Sanctuary at a Glance:

Location: Newaygo County

Size: 95 acres

History: Purchased in 1999. A 15-acre addition was acquired in early 2013.

About MNA:

The Michigan Nature Association is a nonprofit conservation organization working to protect Michigan's rare, threatened and endangered species by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

Established in 1952, MNA's members, donors, and volunteers have built a remarkable network of more than 170 nature sanctuaries across the state – the largest network of natural areas established and maintained by a nonprofit conservation organization in Michigan.



Michigan Nature Association

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Photo: Chuck Vanette

Located in Newaygo County, the Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary is composed of dry sand prairie and oak pine barrens, which are home to more than 100 different plant and animal species.

Red oak, white oak, and white pine are the dominant trees in the barrens. Stunning yellow prickly pear cactus blooms throughout the prairies, along with wild blue lupine, puccoon and dotted horsemint.

The Karner Blue butterfly is a threatened species that lives among the wild blue lupine plants. Open areas with sandy soils in the sanctuary provide ample habitat for the Karner Blue. Wild blue lupine is a vital part of the Karner Blue butterfly's survival, as it is eaten by Karner Blue caterpillars and used by adult butterflies for laying eggs.

MNA purchased the first 80-acre parcel in 1999. In early 2013, MNA purchased an additional 15 acres along the southeast corner of the sanctuary. The expansion is made of a combination of rich conifer swamp, tamarack swamp, northern fen, oak-pine barrens, and emergent wetlands. Multiple springs dot the bank of the bluff, criss-crossing through wetlands toward the Muskegon River.

Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary | Michigan Nature Association

Disturbance through periodic fire plays an important role in maintaining species diversity and retaining the open conditions of the grasslands and barrens habitat in the Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary. Fire management helps control the overgrowth of tree and shrub species.

If left unmanaged, tree and shrub species will form a canopy over the sanctuary, resulting in increased shading and loss of shade-intolerant dry sand prairie and wild blue lupine.

Fire management and other stewardship projects help to keep these invasive species under control and maintain the species diversity in the sanctuary. MNA is fortunate to have a number of dedicated volunteers and stewards who work to maintain the sanctuary.

To take part in a volunteer day at the Karner Blue Nature Sanctuary, visit the News and Events section of www.michigannature.org.



Photo: Al Menk



Photo: Chuck Vanette

Planning Your Visit:

For visitors hoping to catch a glimpse of the prickly pear cactus' yellow flowers, the best time to explore the sanctuary is in late spring and early summer.

How to Get There:

Located on the corner of Spruce Avenue and East 72nd Street in Brooks Township, northeast of Newaygo.

Take M-37/M-82 north from downtown Newaygo and turn east onto Croton Dr. after passing over the Muskegon River (M-82 splits off going west at this same intersection). From Croton Dr., turn south onto Spruce Ave. and look for the new sanctuary sign. Park on the east or west side of Spruce Ave.



Sanctuary Map